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PLANETARY PHENOMENA FOR MARCH AND APRIL, 1914.

By Malcolm McNeill.

PHASES OF THE MOON, PACIFIC TIME.

First Quarter	Mar. 4,	9^h 3^m P.M.	First Quarter	Apr. 3,	11^h 41^m A.M.
Full Moon	" 11,	8 18 P.M.	Full Moon	" 10,	5 28 A.M.
Last Quarter	" 18,	11 39 A.M.	Last Quarter	" 16,	11 52 P.M.
New Moon	" 26,	10 9 A.M.	New Moon	" 25,	3 22 A.M.

The second eclipse of the year, a partial eclipse of the Moon, will occur on March 11th. It will be visible generally thruout out the United States. It is nearly total, the maximum obscuration being 92 per cent. The principal circumstances are as follows, Pacific time:—

Moon enters penumbra	March 11,	5^h 41^m P.M.
Moon enters shadow	" 11,	6 42 P.M.
Middle of the eclipse	" 11,	8 13 P.M.
Moon leaves shadow	" 11,	9 44 P.M.
Moon leaves penumbra	" 11,	10 45 P.M.

The Sun passes the vernal equinox and spring begins March 21st, 3 A. M. Pacific time.

Mercury on March 1st is an evening star, setting about an hour and a quarter after sunset, and may therefore be seen under good weather conditions; but this condition lasts only a few days, as the planet rapidly approaches inferior conjunction, which it reaches on the morning of March 10th, and becomes a morning star. It then moves out toward greatest west elongation, reaching this on April 6th, when its distance from the Sun is 27° 46′. This greatest elongation is much greater than the average greatest, as it occurs only one day after aphelion passage; but as the planet is more than 10° south of the Sun at this time, the interval between the rising of the planet and of the Sun will at its best be scarcely more than an hour, and the conditions for visibility are therefore not good. The planet will then gradually approach the Sun, being well on toward superior conjunction by the end of the month. *Mercury* will be in conjunction with *Venus* on March 6th, passing it 5° 28′ to the north.

Venus is an evening star, having passed superior conjunction with the Sun on February 11th, but will not be easy to see during early March on account of its nearness to the Sun. It will set less than half an hour after sunset until near the middle of the month. Its apparent distance from the Sun increases somewhat rapidly, and by the end of April the interval between the setting of the Sun and of the planet will be more than an hour and a half. It will therefore be an easy object during April, but will not be nearly as conspicuous as it will be during the autumn, when its real distance from the Earth will be much less. On April 1st its distance from us will be 155,000,000 miles, and at the time of greatest brightness next October its distance will be only 40,000,000 miles.

Mars is still in fine position for evening observation, remaining above the horizon until half-after three on March 1st, and until nearly 1 A. M. on April 30th. During the two months it moves about 24° eastward and 5° southward from the constellation *Gemini* into *Cancer*. About the middle of April it is about 5° south of *Pollux, β Geminorum*, a position less than 1° south of the position it held in December, 1913. Since its opposition in January its path has been several degrees north of the ecliptic, and on March 22d reaches its greatest heliocentric latitude north. Its brightness is rapidly growing less, being on March 1st only 41 per cent of that at opposition and on April 30th only 16 per cent. On March 1st its distance from the Earth is 88,000,000 miles, only a little less than the Earth's mean distance from the Sun, and by the end of April its distance from the Sun is 140,000,000 miles. On April 26th it is in aphelion, its distance from the Sun being on that date 155,000,000 miles.

Jupiter is a morning star, and is now far enough away from the Sun to be easily visible. It rises shortly after 5 A. M. on March 1st and at a little before 2 A. M. at the end of April. It is in the constellation *Capricorn* and moves about 12° eastward and 3° northward during the two months.

Saturn is still in good position for evening observation, altho it sets earlier. On March 1st it sets somewhat after

1 A. M. and on April 30th at a little before 10 P. M. Its general position in the sky is about two hours west of *Mars*. It is in the constellation *Taurus*, and on March 1st is about 5° north and east of the first-magnitude star *Aldebaran*, *α Tauri*. During March and April it moves about 5° eastward and 1° northward. As seen in the telescope the ratio of minor to major axis of the rings remains about the same, a little less than one half.

Uranus is a morning object, rising about an hour and a half before sunrise on March 1st and at about half-after one on April 30th. It is in the constellation *Capricorn* and moves about 2° eastward and a little northward during the two months. It is very close to *Jupiter* early in March, the planets being in conjunction on March 4th about 1 A. M. Pacific time. *Uranus* is then only 9′ south of *Jupiter*. The planets will separate rather slowly, about 10′ daily, *Jupiter* moving relatively faster eastward, and by the end of April *Jupiter* will be about 8° east of *Uranus*.

Neptune is in the evening sky, setting about 4:30 A. M. on March 1st and at about 12:30 A. M. on April 30th. It is on the border-line between the constellations *Gemini* and *Cancer*. It will be in conjunction with *Mars* on April 21st, the latter passing 2° 34′ north of *Neptune*.

(EIGHTY-FIRST) AWARD OF THE DONOHOE COMET-MEDAL.

The Comet-Medal of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific has been awarded to Mr. P. T. DELAVAN, of La Plata, Argentina, for the discovery of an unexpected comet on December 17, 1913.

Committee on the Comet-Medal:
W. W. CAMPBELL,
S. D. TOWNLEY,
H. D. CURTIS.